491 Derbent, and Makhach-Kala, or Temir-Khan Shura (Buynaksk): and even this road can be sealed off successfully at the narrow point where the city of Derbent ("the closing of the [912] doors") is situated. The Great Caucasus Wall began at Derbent. This wall is a counterpart of the limes romanus in Europe or the Great Chinese Wall, and was built in the 6th century by the Byzantine and Sassanian Empires at their joint, and not insignificant, expense, in order to create an unconquerable defense line against the dangerous nomad tribes of the vast northern plains. At Derbent, the eastern extremity of the wall can still be seen submerged in the Caspian waters; it extended as far west as the Darial Gorge. The western half of the Caucasus was evidently considered to be naturally safe. Surprisingly enough, the communication lines between Trans-Caucasia and the north are still very few in number today, and there exist only two railroad lines, along both coasts, and one major road across the Caucasian range -- the so-called Georgian Army Road from Tiflis to Ordzhonikidze (Vladikaukaz, Dzaudjyqau). The other roads across the Caucasus are not of the same quality as the Georgian Army Road, and are unsuitable for modern heavier traffic. [496] Not a single railroad line has been built across the Great Caucasus, even though as early as the 1870s a number of projects for a railroad crossing the Caucasus between Tiflis and Vladikavkaz were in preparation.

C. 342 building; the floor consisted of packed earth and contained a firepit, above which was placed a high chimney of straw coated with clay. Outside the enclosure containing living quarters, horse-stable, and sheepfold, there was a special lodging for guests (R. kunatskaia). The C. G. 342 dwellings of the Abkhaz were the most primitive in the Caucasus: They were rectangular structures with walls of wattle, in cold weather sometimes covered with ferns. The thatched roof rested on a beam supported at the rear by a pole, and in front by two slanting poles which touched at the top. In the back there was a partition which served several purposes: storeroom, guest room, winter stable.

C. 342 361 In the mountains of Dagestan the houses are clustered close together into villages which rise terrace-like on inaccessible and easily defended mountain slopes. The houses stand in rows, so that the roofs of one row serve as the front yards of the houses in the row above. The most common building material is rough stone; the houses consist of two or more stories, the lower one being used as stable and storeroom, the upper one containing the rooms for men, for women and for guests.

C. G. • 712 A typical feature of the Caucasian mountaineers' settlements are the defense towers, which in the Svan villages are built near almost every house and are also common in the settlements of the Khevsur, Tush and Pshav. On the northern slopes of the Caucasus mountains they are found in Ossete territory and also in the

& 712 regions which belonged to the Karachai, Balkar and Chechen. These towers, in which the inhabitants with their cattle sought a refuge in case of an armed attack, have a square ground-plan; they are built of rough stones and are from 30-60 ft. high. The wall contains loopholes on each floor, and a single entrance opening high above the ground. The Svan towers have perpendicular walls with a projection decorated with arches at the top, and a saddle-shaped roof; those of the Khevsur taper towards the top and have a pyramidal roof. In other areas both types are found. In Dagestan defense towers are not found, but many villages have watch towers.

[824 cont.]

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Fig. 503. Persian fruit-seller in Baku.

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[177] through the Tatars, have exerted a strong influence from the earliest times on southern and eastern Caucasia with regard to mental culture, art, warfare, etc. As a landmark of their power, the great stone wall, which extends from the national portal on the Caspian Sea, from the city [825] of Derbend
[103] (Persian = gate-lock; Tatar, Demīr-kapū = iron door; Arabic, Bāb-el-abwāb = gate of gates), to the west 60 to 70 kilometers into the mountains, still stands today. It was erected by the Sassanid king, Khosrau Anōšarvān (531-579 A.D.), for protection against the invasions of the Khazar and Alan, against whom his father, Kobad (491-531), had already built a wall
• [112] of mud bricks that was strengthened by many towers and small citadels (kalé). Except for indigenous tribes, Khosrau entrusted the defense of the wall primarily to Iranian settlers whom he had brought over from Persia and the land of Sogd, that is Kharezmia and Samarkand. The inhabitants of the Kaitakh region, the Tabassaran, seem to be descendants of these settlers, and their name may be a contraction of Tabor-i-Khorassan (= host, people from Khorassan); likewise the Tāt between Baku, Kuba, and the Babadagh and near Derbend. The former may have sprung from a mixture of Lezgin with